



McGREGOR W. SCOTT

*United States Attorney
Eastern District of California*

NEWS RELEASE

Sacramento
501 I Street, Suite 10-100
Sacramento, CA 95814
Tel 916/554-2700
TTY 916/554-2877

Fresno
2500 Tulare Street, Suite 4401
Fresno, CA 93721
Tel 559/497-4000
TTY 559/497-4500

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Contact: Lauren Horwood
916/554-2706

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FORMER SOUTH LAKE TAHOE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER SENTENCED TO 97 MONTHS IN PRISON IN CHILD PORNOGRAPHY CASE

SACRAMENTO—United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott announced today that KARSTEN GRONWOLD, 50, of South Lake Tahoe, was sentenced by United States District Judge William B. Shubb to 97 months in prison for visual depictions of minors engaged in sexually explicit conduct. Under federal law, GRONWOLD will be required to serve at least 85 percent of the prison time imposed. He is not a citizen and likely will be deported to Australia following his prison sentence.

The case was the product of a joint investigation by the Sacramento Valley Hi-Tech Crimes Task Force and the El Dorado County Sheriff's Department as a part of Project Safe Childhood (PSC). Project Safe Childhood is a United States Department of Justice initiative established to increase federal prosecutions of violent sexual predators of children. For additional information on the PSC initiative, please go to www.projectsafechildhood.gov or call the United States Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of California and ask to speak with the PSC coordinator.

This investigation resulted from complaints made to the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children's CyberTipline (www.cybertipline.com or 1-800-843-5678). The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children is a congressionally mandated clearinghouse that gathers information for law enforcement use.

According to Assistant United States Attorneys Camil A. Skipper and Benjamin B. Wagner, who

prosecuted the case, GRONWOLD told Judge Shubb during the sentencing hearing that while he did not previously appreciate the wrongfulness of his conduct, “my behavior was indeed horribly wrong and for that I am sorry.” He said he had been living “a hidden life of lies and secrets.”

GRONWOLD was also sentenced to serve 10 years of supervised release following his prison sentence, to register as a sex offender, and to forfeit his computer.

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